bricks were made without much straw. Never, it was contended, had there been such a human-interest story since Mark Antony sacrificed an Empire for Cleopatra, and then there were no American journalists to do it justice. On this occasion, American journalists were determined that no leavings should remain to be used by some subsequent Shakespeare. They would do the work themselves, and do it well; did it so well that, despite attempts to prevent them from reaching an English audience,[37] they were heard across the Atlantic. Newspaper cuttings circulated, arousing sometimes indignation, but always interest; and talk became incessant.

After King George V, that such commentaries on the King's private life should be conceivable, let alone credible, represented a sudden and drastic change. The Court in his time might have been dull, but it was impregnably respectable. Above all, it was solid; and solidity was the most necessary quality of all in a sovereign and his way of life. So much thought solid had proved unsubstantial; and now was the Monarchy itself to partake of the same unsubstantiality ? Was the gold of the Imperial Crown to suffer the same fate as the Gold Standard? To be Prince Charming suited a prince, but a King Charming would never do; firmly and properly had Prince Hal put away FalstafF, along with other princely things, when he became King Henry. Let King Edward do likewise.

He showed little inclination so to do, in that sharing the fate of many of his generation, who, youthful, were required to be mature, and in maturity persisted in being youthful.

His position demanded of him that he should suffer pomposity gladly, and bear the dull burden of authority without the delight of exercising it; whereas his inclination was to dispense with ceremonial respect and make his own will felt; to be both less and more than the King who ruled before him. The same conflicts run throughout Society, taking different forms at different levels; bricklayers, clergymen and kings betray the same restlessness in

[87] The English distributors of *Time* on several occasions took the precaution of removing pages which dealt with the King and Mrs. Simpson.